



The Small Fortress was built at the end of the 18th century near the confluence of the Labe (Elbe) and Ohře (Eger) rivers as part of the fortifications named Terezín (Theresienstadt) in honor of Empress Maria Theresa. It was used, almost from its very beginnings, as a prison not only for army offenders but also many people involved in the national liberation struggle in Central and South-eastern Europe (A. Ypsilanti, leader of the anti-Turkish uprising in Greece, Hungarian and Prague insurgents from the year 1848). The assassins of Franz Ferdinand d'Este and the Czech army mutineers from Rumburk were imprisoned in the Small Fortress in the First World War.

Following the occupation of the Czech lands in March 1939, with the existing prisons gradually filling up as a result of Nazi terror, the Prague Gestapo Police Prison was set up in the Small Fortress in 1940. The first inmates arrived on June 14, 1940. By the end of the war, 32,000 prisoners of whom 5,000 were women passed through the Small Fortress. These were primarily Czechs, later other nationals, for instance citizens of the former Soviet Union, Poles, Germans and Yugoslavs. Soviet, British and French POWs and also a group of French hostages and other prisoners were kept in the Small Fortress in 1945. Particularly harsh fate was meted out for the Jewish inmates. Most of the prisoners were people arrested for different signs of resistance to the Nazi regime. The prison

population included primarily people from a broad spectrum of the Czech resistance movement (e.g. Defense of the Nation, Petition Committee "We Shall Be Loyal", clandestine Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, members of the Sokol physical training movement, firemen, railwaymen, and members of many other local resistance groups). For most of the inmates the Small Fortress was just a stop-over, as they were later sent on to Nazi courts, other prisons, penitentiaries and concentration camps, where 5,500 of them perished. Some 2,600 prisoners died in Terezín due to harsh living conditions, diseases and torture by wardens and guards.

At the end of the war, a typhoid epidemic broke out in the overcrowded prison, the Nazi command taking no countermeasures whatsoever. Doctors and medical personnel from Prague and Roudnice nad Labem, members of the Czech Action for Help, started working in Terezín on May 2, 1945. But a full-scale rescue operation to save the lives of the sick inmates was launched only after the escape of the guards on May 5, 1945, with the local Czech inhabitants joining in and lending a helping hand. In the evening of May 8, the first Soviet army combat vehicles passed through Terezín, and the Red Army Medical Corps helped considerably in doing away with the epidemic. The former prisoners were then repatriated until the summer of 1945.

Between 1945–1948 the Small Fortress served as an internment camp for Germans before their resettlement from Czechoslovakia.

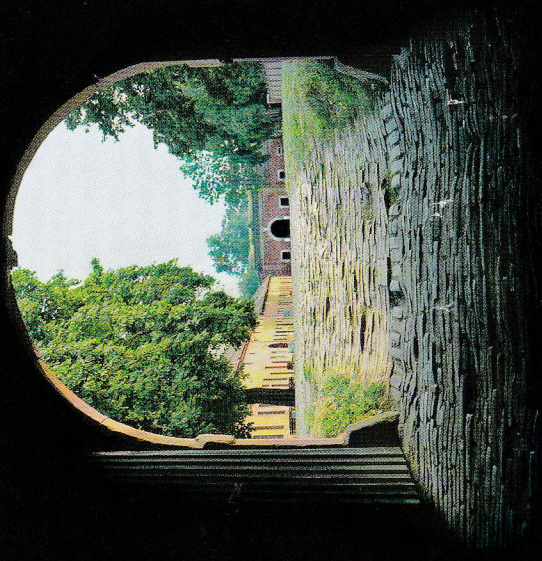
In September 1945, a National Cemetery was laid out in the foreground of the Small Fortress, with the remains of some 10,000 victims of the Gestapo Police Prison in the Small Fortress, the Jewish Ghetto in Terezín and the concentration camp in Litoměřice being gradually transferred and reburied in the cemetery.

At the initiative of the former inmates and surviving relatives the Czechoslovak Government decided in 1947 to establish the Terezín Memorial whose key mission is to commemorate the pernicious consequences of the suppression of freedom, democracy and human rights.

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PAMÁTNÍK TEREZÍN
MUSEUM
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SMALL FORTRESS TEREZÍN



Visiting hours: daily, all year round

Winter time/CET (Nov 1 – March 31): 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Summer time/CEST (April 1 – Oct 31): 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Closed on: December 24 – 26, January 1

The opening hours are changed to the summer and winter schedule on the day of the actual time change. The dates Oct 31/Nov 1 and March 31/April 1 are only tentative!

Sale of books and souvenirs, a permanent exhibition, short-term displays, film screenings, refreshment.

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